

I have hope for the future because our Americans are embracing the responsibility of memory. In the 2 years since the Holocaust Memorial Museum opened, more than 4 million people—more, many more than were expected—have visited that remarkable place. The daily number of visitors is still increasing, and about 8 of every 10 Americans who visit are not Jews. Twenty thousand school groups have been there already, and with the help of the museum, some 40,000 teachers around our country now teach about the Holocaust in their classes. Perhaps those children one day will be the kind of adults who would stop and ask why and do more if someone ever came to take a friend or a neighbor away.

If so, we will have been true to the memory of the victims of the Holocaust, and we will have pressed the cause of decency and human dignity yet one more step forward. This is our task: making memory real and making memory a guide for our own actions.

I am reminded of the extraordinary visit I had last year to the Old Jewish Cemetery in Prague, that great forest of stones. As you know, everyone who visits there, or any Jewish cemetery, puts a stone on a grave, adding to memory, never subtracting from it. For me, someone new

to the experience, it was an overwhelming symbol of how we all ought to think and live.

Over the centuries, memory has been built there in Prague in a very deep and profound way, in the city that Hitler wanted to turn into a museum for what he hoped would be an extinct people. We, too, now must add to those stones, stones of remembrance, like this day-long gathering, stones that add to the memory of the victims and to our knowledge of the barbarism that claimed them.

Ultimately, I wanted to be here today, after all our country has been through in these last days, because you have taught me that the vigilance of memory is our greatest defense, and I thank you all for that.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:35 p.m. at Madison Square Garden. In his remarks, he referred to Foreign Minister Shimon Peres of Israel; Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, chief Rabbi of the Ashkenazic Jews of Israel; Gov. George E. Pataki of New York; Sheldon Silver, New York State House speaker; Mayor Rudolph Giuliani of New York City; and Benjamin Meed, president, American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, and his wife, Vladka.

Remarks at the World Jewish Congress Dinner in New York City

April 30, 1995

Thank you very much. Thank you, Edgar. Foreign Minister Peres, thank you for being here, for your visionary leadership, your wise words. To all of the friends of Edgar Bronfman who are here from Canada and from around the world, I am profoundly honored to be with you this evening and to receive this wonderful Nahum Goldmann Award.

I know he was the president of the World Jewish Congress, the World Zionist Organization, the Jewish Agency, Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations. Every group I can think of associated with Edgar Bronfman, except the Seagram's Group—[*laughter*]*—*we would all like to be president of that, thanks to the work he has done. I would remind you, Edgar, that I'm a relatively young man without a great deal of job security. I hope

you will keep me in mind in the future. [*Laughter*]

We gather—I wish you wouldn't laugh quite so much at that. [*Laughter*] We gather tonight to celebrate the accomplishments of an extraordinary man. For all of you, your presence here is testimony to your shared values, your shared goals, and to the countless lives that Edgar Bronfman has touched. In these years of great change and opportunity and of great anxiety and even fear, in years of too much cynicism, the Jewish community has found in Edgar Bronfman the rarest of combination, a leader armed with passion for his people's cause and endowed with the strength to act on that passion. As president of the World Jewish Congress and a citizen of the world, Edgar Bronfman has given life to

Emerson's observation that an institution is the length and shadow of one man.

In the long years when the Soviet Union imprisoned Jews within its borders, many raised their voices in anger, but Edgar journeyed to Moscow to win their release. When millions in Russia and all across Eastern Europe won their freedom from tyranny's grip, many rejoiced, but Edgar took the lead in helping Jewish communities reclaim their proud spiritual and physical heritage that many feared had been lost forever. And as a new era of peace dawns in the Middle East, many celebrate, but Edgar works every day to reconcile the people of Israel and the Palestinians and to bring new life to ancient lands. Wherever Jews dream of a better life and wherever those dreams are threatened, Edgar Bronfman is sure to be found.

A week ago today, Hillary and I went to Oklahoma City to mourn with and pay our respects to the victims and families of the terrible bombing there. Last summer, Edgar undertook a similar journey of his own when he flew to Argentina just hours after hearing of the bombing of the Jewish community center in Buenos Aires. There in the midst of the rubble and the ruins, he called on leaders, visited the injured, spoke to the children, told them to stand firm against those who traffic in fear, to hope and not hate, but to work every day to turn that hope into reality. In these times, that is a lesson every citizen of every continent should learn and take to heart. It echoes loudest in the ears of those who have known so much terror and so much sorrow.

As was said earlier today by my friend Benjamin Meed, we mark the time when half a century ago the most terrible chapter in the history of the Jewish people was brought to a close. Unfortunately, 50 years later, merchants of hate still live among us here at home and around the world. Of course, we cannot compare their actions or their capabilities to the horrors that were visited upon the Jewish people, but they do practice and they do preach violence against those who are of a different color, a different background, or who worship a different God. They do feed on fear and uncertainty. They do promote paranoia. In the name of freedom of speech, they have abandoned the responsibility that democratic freedoms impose on all of us.

In this freest of nations, it must strike all of you as ironic that many of these people attack

our Government and the citizens who work for it, who actually guarantee the freedoms that they abuse. In the name of building a better future, they would relive the most destructive chapters of evil. So while we cannot compare what they are saying and doing to what the Jewish people suffered decades ago, we dare not underestimate the dangers they pose. They can certainly snuff out innocent lives and sow fear in our hearts. They are indifferent to the slaughter of children. They threaten our freedoms and our way of life, and we must stop them.

Our early patriot Samuel Adams once said, "If we suffer tamely a lawless attack upon our liberty, we encourage it and involve others in our doom." Here in America it is not only our right, it is our duty to stop the terror, to bring to justice the guilty, and to stand against the hatred, and to help others in other lands to do the same.

Since the beginning of our administration we have taken broad and swift measures to fight terrorism here and abroad. We have brought to trial the alleged bombers of the World Trade Center, who struck at the heart of this city. We have actively pursued those who crossed the line into illegal and violent activity. We have taken strong actions against nations who harbor terrorists or support their bloody trade. We have worked to prevent acts of terror, sometimes with remarkable success. And in a world where open borders and new technologies make our job harder, we have worked closer and closer with other nations to unravel the networks of terror and hunt down those who threaten our people.

But the tragedy of Oklahoma City and its aftermath have made it clear that we must take stronger steps. This week I asked Congress to approve my antiterrorism initiatives: the power to hire 1,000 new Federal officials in law enforcement and support to create a new counterterrorism center under the direction of the FBI; to authorize the military to use its special capabilities in incidents involving chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons of terror in our country. Our proposals would also allow us to tag materials used to make bombs so that suspects could be more easily traced.

Although no one can guarantee freedom from terror, at least these common sense steps will help to make our people safer. So tonight I appeal again to Congress to pass these measures without delay.

While we take these actions at home, we must also continue and strengthen our fight against terror around the world. Tonight I want to speak to you about terrorism in the Middle East, about rogue nations who sponsor death in order to kill peace and what we can do further to contain them.

From the beginning of my Presidency, our policy in the Middle East has run on two tracks. Support for the peace process that reconciles Israel and her neighbors: I have been honored to work with Prime Minister Rabin and Foreign Minister Peres and their government and the people of Israel in that regard. And the policy of the United States has been the correct one, that we would never seek to impose a peace on Israel and her neighbors, but if Israel takes risks for peace we will be there to minimize those risks and maximize the chances of success. And we are ahead of where we were 2 years ago, and by God's grace, we will continue to make progress in the years ahead. I am especially proud of this work that we have all been able to do and particularly proud of the work of Secretary Christopher in this regard.

But the second part of our policy in the Middle East is also important: opposition to all those who would derail the peace process, promote terrorism, or develop weapons of mass destruction. The dangers remain great. The closer we come to achieving peace and normalcy in the region, the more desperate become the enemies of peace. On buses and along busy streets, terrorist attacks have claimed innocent lives, and we grieve with the families of the victims.

We have strengthened our efforts to act against groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, and we are encouraging Chairman Arafat in his efforts to crack down on arrests and prosecute those extremists who resort to violence. But individuals and extremist groups are not the only threat. Israel shares the lands of the Middle East with nations who still seek to destroy the peace, nations like Iran and Iraq and Libya. They aim to destabilize the region. They harbor terrorists within their borders. They establish and support terrorist base camps in other lands. They hunger for nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. Every day, they put innocent civilians in danger and stir up discord among nations. Our policy toward these rogue states is simple: They must be contained.

Iran has presented a particular problem to the peace process of the peoples of the Middle

East. From the beginning of our administration, we have moved to counter Iran's support of international terrorism and in particular its backing for violent opponents of peace in the Middle East.

At the same time, we have tried to stop its quest to acquire weapons of mass destruction, which would make it a threat not only to its neighbors but to the entire region and the world. Our policy has helped to make Iran pay a price for its actions. The nation has effectively been cut off from receiving credit from international financial institutions.

The United States and our allies in the G-7 have stopped Iranian purchases of weapons from our nations. We have refused to cooperate with Iran on sensitive matters such as nuclear energy and have tightened trade restrictions on items that might be used to build weapons.

We have not always been successful, as all of you know. The most recent reports of Russia's agreement to sell gas centrifuge equipment to the Iranians and to train nuclear technicians from Tehran are disturbing to me. Because Iran has more than enough oil to supply its energy needs, we must assume that it seeks this technology in order to develop its capacity to build nuclear weapons.

The United States has an overwhelming interest in fighting the spread of these weapons. And Russia, as a neighbor of Iran, has a particular interest in the same goal. If Russia goes forward with the sale of nuclear reactors, it will only undermine that objective. We have strenuously urged the Russians to reverse these decisions, and I will make that case directly to President Yeltsin when I visit Moscow in just a few days.

My fellow Americans, I speak especially to you when I say that many people have argued passionately that the best route to change Iranian behavior is by engaging the country. Unfortunately, there is no evidence to support that argument. Indeed, the evidence of the last 2 years suggest exactly the reverse. Iran's appetite for acquiring and developing nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them has only grown larger. Even as prospects for the peace in the Middle East have grown, Iran has broadened its role as an inspiration and paymaster to terrorists. And there is nothing to suggest that further engagement will alter that course.

That is why last month, after the Conoco Company announced a \$1 billion contract to help Iran develop its oil reserves, I was prepared

to stop the project by signing an Executive order banning any United States firms from financing, supervising, or managing Iranian oil reserves. But Conoco ultimately decided to abandon the deal. And let me add that one of the most effective opponents of that was Edgar Bronfman. As a major shareholder in Conoco, he would have gained financially from that. But he put the public interest above his self-interest, as he has so often throughout his life.

I did not reach my decision in that case lightly. One of the major hallmarks of our administration's foreign policy has been opening new markets abroad and aggressively helping our firms to compete, to create jobs for Americans here at home. But there are times when important economic interests must give way to even more important security interests. And this is one of those times.

So tonight, in this great dinner in honor of this champion of freedom, I am formally announcing my intention to cut off all trade and investment with Iran and to suspend nearly all other economic activity between our nations. This is not a step I take lightly, but I am convinced that instituting a trade embargo with Iran is the most effective way our Nation can help to curb that nation's drive to acquire devastating weapons and its continued support for terrorism.

The Executive order I plan to sign next week will cover not only the energy sector but all United States exports to Iran and all investments by American firms and the branches they own or control. We estimate that the embargo will have a limited effect on our companies and our workers. But after reviewing all the options, I have determined that if we are to succeed in getting other nations to make sacrifices in order to change Iran's conduct, we, too, must be willing to sacrifice and lead the way. In my discussions with President Yeltsin and with the G-7 leaders in Halifax in June, I will urge other countries to take similar or parallel actions.

I do want you to know that I do oppose the suggestion some have made that we impose a secondary boycott and prohibit foreign firms doing business with Iran from doing business with the United States. I don't agree with that. I think that decision would cause unnecessary strain with our allies at a time when we need our friends' cooperations. My decision to impose this embargo should make clear to Iran and to the whole world the unrelenting determina-

tion of the United States to do all we can to arrest the behavior and ambitions of that nation.

It would be wrong to do nothing. It would be wrong to do nothing as Iran continues its pursuit of nuclear weapons. It would be wrong to stand pat in the face of overwhelming evidence of Tehran's support for terrorists that would threaten the dawn of peace.

Securing a lasting and comprehensive peace must be our urgent priority. The heart of our efforts, of course, is the continuing strong relationship between the United States and Israel. But we must make it work by standing against those who would wreck the peace and destroy the future even if peace is made.

Let me say to you tonight, the strategy we have pursued is working. Never before have Arabs and Israelis met so frequently, traveled so freely, understood so well that their common destiny in peace and prosperity is urgent for all. When they are ready to turn a page on the path, the United States will work with them to shape a future of hope. And we will not stop working until the circle of peace is complete.

Six months ago, when I had the great honor to visit Jerusalem after we signed the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel, I said to the members of the Knesset that the enemies of peace will not succeed because they are the past, not the future. We must work to make that statement true.

Foreign Minister Peres said that he felt sorry for me because we had lost our enemy. And we all laughed a little bit uncomfortably because we knew there was a grain of truth in what he said. Oh, we knew so clearly when we had the Soviet Union, the cold war, and the massive nuclear threat. Today, no Soviet Union, no cold war, and for the first time since the dawn of the nuclear age, no Russian missiles are pointed at the children of the United States. That is a cause for celebration, and we should be happy about it.

But I will tell you what I think the threat to the 21st century will be, and you can see its outlines all over the world today. The threat to the 21st century is simply this: These children who are here tonight should grow up in the most exciting, most prosperous, most diverse world in the entire history of humanity, but all the forces that are lifting us up and bringing us together contain a dark underside of possibility for evil, so that the forces of integration

that are lifting the world up and bringing the world together carry within them the seeds of disintegration. And the great challenge for the 21st century will be how to see the opportunities presented by technology, by free movement of people, by the openness of society, by the shrinking of the borders between nations without being absolutely consumed by the dangers and threats that those same forces present.

That is the challenge of the 21st century because evil has not been uprooted from human nature, and the more open and the more flexible we are, the more vulnerable we are to the forces of organized evil. That is what you saw in Oklahoma City. That is what you saw in the terrible incident with the religious fanatic taking a little vial of poison gas in the subway in Japan. That is what I see when I go to Russia and what they really want from me now is an FBI office because organized crime is taking over their banks. Or when I went to the Baltics, and in Riga what they really want is some law enforcement help because now that the totalitarian regime has been stripped away from the Baltics, they are worried that their port will become a conduit for drugs and other instruments of destruction.

And that is what you see in the Middle East. Why do the terrorists seek to blow up innocent people in Israel? Because the only way to make the peace work between the Israelis and the Palestinians is to have free movement between the two. And if free movement between the two means that innocent people are killed, then the Government of Israel, because the people demand it, must erect barriers. And then when

the barriers are erected, the income goes down in the Palestinian area, making the peace a failure. The openness makes the peace possible to succeed and provides the threat to its undoing. That is a microcosm of the challenge of the 21st century.

If you go home tonight and think about it, nearly every modern problem can be explained in those terms. The forces of progress and opportunity and integration all carry within them the seeds of abuse by organized evil. And we must stand up against it.

In Proverbs, the Scriptures say that there will someday come a time when the wicked are overthrown and there are no more, but the house of righteousness will stand. Now in my Baptist upbringing, all the preachers used to tell us that that would only happen when the end of human time had come and we were all lifted to the hereafter. No one knows that, but I will say this: Edgar Bronfman has worked to hasten the day when the house of righteousness will stand, and so must we.

This can be a great time for human history, and our children and grandchildren can have a great future because of the lives of people like Edgar Bronfman. But the challenge is clear: Can we make the forces of terror the past? Yes, we can, but we have to work at it.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:34 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. The Executive order of May 6 prohibiting certain transactions with respect to Iran is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Women Voters Project Kickoff Luncheon May 1, 1995

That may be the best introduction I ever received, and if I had really good judgment, I'd just sit down. *[Laughter]*

Thank you, Ellen Malcolm, Senator Mikulski, and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson-Lee, and to the Members of Congress who are out in the audience, my longtime friend Ann Richards. I met Ann Richards over 20 years ago. And I think she was living in a place called Lacy Lake View. And it was easy for me to see even then,

and even by Texas standards, she was a little bit larger than life. *[Laughter]* Humor and empathy, grit and grace, courage and decency, I respect her, and I envy her. Her jokes are always better than mine. *[Laughter]* And you'll all remember that she delivered one of the best political lines ever. It perfectly captured the mood of America. Do you remember? "Pass the Doritos, Mario." Didn't you always want to do one of those commercials? I did. *[Laughter]*